

THE ECONOMY OF INDO-CHINA

creased medical care. *In* 1924 sanitary control was given to doctors of the Institut Pasteur to conduct research on malaria. Companies, in order to decrease coolie mortality, were willing to finance these efforts. Safe drinking-water, enforced vaccination, copious distribution of quinine, and plentiful supplies of drugs were part of the new regulations. The Bernard Commission in 1925 had studied improvement of plantation infirmaries. These medical requirements cost the companies an additional 140 to 258 francs per coolie, and naturally the planters resented what they termed excessive coddling. The government felt that it was not over-paternalistic in a country given to swift and fatal epidemics, and it had the satisfaction of having its work enthusiastically approved in 1927 by a delegate from the League of Nations. The experiments made on the Michelin plantation at Thuan-loi, in 1929, proved that these expensive hygienic precautions were more than repaid by increased production.

In preparation for his important edict of October 25, 1927, Varenne had long studied labour problems. Although, in general, the partisan of decentralization, he felt that a federal inspection of labour could cope far better with the increasingly difficult situation than the old local inspectors, because it involved more than one country. These officials were to be chosen from among the civil service, and in some provinces this resulted in a mixed political and labour control. Some planters refused to let their property be inspected, and accused the officials of giving political considerations an exaggerated primacy. Varenne was not discouraged, and further worried planters by increasing control of the recruiting system. He tried to soothe the Tonkinese colonists by

pointing to the local 3 per cent growth of the population, so as to allay their worries lest all the labour be drained to the South. As for the big companies, this was the period of the rubber boom, characterized by the lush growth of speculation. These mushroom concerns often exploited their stockholders before their concessions, and were naturally less considerate of their employees than of those who had entrusted to them their savings.

Varoane worked out accident and sickness insurance when he laid down the principle of limited working hours. He instituted most successfully a system of workers' savings, as a way of keeping at least a nucleus of their wages from being dissipated. Guarantees as to housing, lodging, and salaries were also reinforced. Varenne left Ijado-CMna. Wore lie could complete this work, but his projects were taken up by **Ifesqnier**. His malaria experimentation of the Pasteur Institute proved